Petroleum production by private companies

2446. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of companies in private sector in India which are at present producing or expected to produce petroleum products alongwith their details *viz.*, their names, production capacity, supply position to domestic market etc.;

(b) whether any comparison has so far been made by Government as to why Government companies like IOCL, HPCL etc. are producing oil in refineries on higher cost than private companies; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) to (c) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Alternative of Iran pipeline

2447. SHRIMATI HEMA MALINI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that oil from Central Asian countries like Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Georgia will not only be cheaper but also quicker;

(b) whether it is also a fact that during recent visit of Foreign Minister of Turkey, India was offered an option as a viable alternative to Iran pipeline;

(c) if so, whether Government has taken any steps to obtain oil at cheaper rate; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI DINSHA J. PATEL): (a) and (b) A proposal has been received for transportation of oil from Caspian region through the Mediterranean and Red Sea and into India. The issue also came up for discussion during the visit of Foreign Minister of Turkey to India in February 2008. Techno-economic viability of the project is yet to be established.

(c) and (d) Do not arise in view of (a) and (b) above.

Commercial viability of exploration blocks

2448. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether four oil blocks, out of seven exploration blocks in Kerala-Konkan basin, which were won by reliance Industries, did not find commercial quantities of hydrocarbon;

(b) if so, whether similar blocks won by other private sector have also been identified as commercially non-viable blocks;